

# Too Good for Drugs

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*Program developers or their agents provided the Model Program information below.*

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## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Too Good for Drugs (TGFD) is a school-based prevention program for kindergarten through 12th grade that builds children's resiliency by teaching them how to be socially competent and autonomous problem solvers. It focuses on five skills to increase children's sense of control, responsibility and self-efficacy, goal setting, decisionmaking, bonding with others, identifying and managing emotions, and communicating effectively. TGFD is proven to reduce the intention to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs in middle and high school students.

## **PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

The Mendez Foundation began providing drug prevention education in Hillsborough County, FL in 1978. TGFD began as a sixth-grade program taught in a single school. Since then, it has become a comprehensive K-12 program.

After a national television documentary featured TGFD and other promising programs in 1983, the Foundation received calls from leaders around the country who wanted to replicate the program in their own communities. In response, the Foundation began to publish manuals and offer curriculum training and training of trainers. Revised in 1998, to incorporate leading-edge research, TGFD has been implemented in more than 2,500 districts nationwide.

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## **RECOGNITION**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Model Program

American Medical Association: Excellence in Prevention

Southeastern Drug-Free Schools: Shining Star Award

Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association/DCF Best Practices Conference: First Place in Prevention



## **INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE CLASSIFICATION (IOM)**

### **UNIVERSAL**

Developed for a universal audience.

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## **INTERVENTION TYPE**

### **SCHOOL-BASED**

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## **CONTENT FOCUS**

### **ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, TOBACCO**

Targets general substance use and abuse, emphasizing alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use.

#### **Parent involvement as adjunct strategy:**

Grades K–5 include 10 Home Workout activities per grade level, designed to let students share what they have learned with their parents.

Grades 6–8 include a parent newsletter at each grade level. The high school core curriculum includes nine parent newsletters. The newsletters promote parenting and prevention skills, parent-child interaction, and discussion of skills and concepts students learn in Too Good for Drugs classes.

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## **PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

### **INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, SCHOOL**

#### **INDIVIDUAL**

- Decisionmaking and goal-setting skills
- Stress management skills
- Peer resistance and assertiveness skills
- Internal loss of control
- Positive sense of self-efficacy
- Unfavorable attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use
- Accurate perception of peer norms
- Intentions to avoid alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use

#### **FAMILY**

- Unfavorable parental attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use

#### **SCHOOL**

- Bonding with the teachers/school

## **RISK FACTORS**

### INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, SCHOOL

#### INDIVIDUAL

- Poor decisionmaking and goal-setting skills
- Poor stress management skills
- Weak assertiveness and peer-resistance skills
- Inadequate social skills
- Poor sense of self-efficacy
- External locus of control
- Favorable attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use
- Inaccurate perception of peer norms
- Intentions to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs

#### FAMILY

- Favorable parental attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use

#### SCHOOL

- Lack of bonding with teachers/school
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## **INTERVENTIONS BY DOMAIN**

### INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, PEER, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, SOCIETY

#### INDIVIDUAL

- Life/social skills training

#### FAMILY

- Task-oriented family education sessions to improve family interactions (e.g., parent involvement in program homework assignments, etc.)

#### PEER

- Peer-resistance education
- Peer norms against alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use

#### SCHOOL

- Classroom drug education
- Classroom-based skills development

#### COMMUNITY

- After School Activities to reinforce alcohol, tobacco, and drug education and life/social skills development

#### SOCIETY

- Too Good for Drugs K–12 includes media education to counter alcohol and tobacco advertising

## KEY PROGRAM APPROACHES

### AFTER-SCHOOL CURRICULA, IN-SCHOOL CURRICULA, PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS, SKILL DEVELOPMENT

#### AFTER-SCHOOL CURRICULA

The Too Good for Drugs After School Activities kit may be used in community or after-school settings for children 5 to 13 years of age. The after-school program reinforces skills and concepts taught in Too Good for Drugs and other school-based prevention programs. It may be used independently but is not designed to replace comprehensive, school-based programs.

#### IN-SCHOOL CURRICULA

There are separate, developmentally appropriate Too Good for Drugs curricula at each grade level, K–8, and a comprehensive high school curriculum. Each curriculum builds on earlier grade levels. To strengthen the program, the curriculum includes lesson extenders (supplemental activities) for infusing prevention concepts into a variety of subject areas.

Skills and concepts taught in the K–8 curricula include short-term effects and long-term consequences of drug use, normative education, setting goals and overcoming obstacles, analyzing media messages, building healthy friendships, healthy ways to handle stress, peer-resistance skills, accepting personal responsibility for choices, and choosing healthy leisure activities. The high school core curriculum teaches the same skills and concepts; it also includes lessons on resolving conflicts, respecting self and others, choosing healthy relationships, understanding addictions, and helping a friend.

#### PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

A grade K–12 parent component promotes parent-child interaction and discussion and encourages students to use skills learned in Too Good for Drugs classes at school.

Grades K–5 include a Home Workout: Exercises for Parents and Kids after each lesson.

Grades 6–8 include a parent newsletter for each grade level.

High school core curriculum includes nine parent newsletters.

#### SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Too Good for Drugs addresses decisionmaking, goal setting, managing emotions, peer resistance, assertiveness, and social skills. The high school core curriculum also teaches conflict resolution skills.

#### HOW IT WORKS

TGFD consists of sequential curricula, developmentally appropriate to each grade level, that builds on skills learned in the previous years. While one year of TGFD has produced measurable positive effects, multiyear programming prevents or reduces degradation of these effects. For maximum effectiveness, TGFD should be implemented each school year. TGFD uses proven, research-based strategies, including:

- **Multilesson, Multigrade-Level Programming:** 10 lessons per grade level, kindergarten through 8th grade; 26 high school lessons, with 14 core lessons delivered in the same class and 12 infusion lessons included in other academic classes, all over the course of a single grade level.

- **Normative Education:** provides accurate information about the percentage of youth that use drugs and the percentage that would disapprove if their friends used drugs.
- **Information on Harmful Effects of Drug Use:** raises students' perception of risk.
- **Prosocial Skills Development:** features goal setting, decisionmaking, coping, communication, and peer refusal skills.
- **Diverse Role-Play Situations:** relating to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and associated problem behaviors provide many opportunities for practice.
- **Cooperative Learning:** promotes prosocial skills and academic development.
- **Parental Involvement:** promotes discussion and reinforces concepts and skills students learn in TGFD.

For successful implementation, TGFD requires skilled, committed, enthusiastic teachers who personally exhibit the attributes encouraged by TGFD, e.g., non-smokers and non-substance abusers, possessing positive social skills, showing empathy and kindness. Staff-to-program participant ratio is 1 teacher for 30 to 35 students.

For maximum effectiveness, teachers should deliver:

- One lesson per week for 10 weeks (K-8th grade) and "Home Workouts" for parents
- One lesson per week for 14 weeks (in one high school grade level) or twice a week, if needed, and "Home Pages" for parents
- Twelve high school infusion lessons within subject areas To attain the best result, each school should:
- Conduct a needs assessment
- Set measurable goals and objectives
- Appoint a schoolwide TGFD coordinator and grade-level coordinators, if desired
- Plan program implementation
- Conduct "TGFD & Violence—Educators" staff development workshop or present overview of TGFD for faculty, and teacher training
- Observe lessons; provide feedback; conduct process evaluations
- Conduct pre- and posttests
- Write evaluation report; recommend implementation changes, if needed

Ideally, implementation begins with "Too Good for Drugs & Violence—Educators," a 10-hour staff development program attended by all school personnel—from teachers and secretaries to janitors and food service workers. This course is designed to evaluate and improve school and classroom climate, establish positive norms, and increase students' bonding with the teacher and school. At minimum, begin with an overview of TGFD for the entire school staff.

TGFD is designed for a classroom with a cassette player and overhead projector.

## **OUTCOMES**

### **REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS, IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS, OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES**

#### **REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS**

Each of five studies showed positive effects on other risk and protective factors relating to student alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and violence, including significant increases ( $p \leq .001$ ) in:

- Attitudes toward drugs
- Attitudes toward violence
- Perceived peer norms
- Peer disapproval of use
- Emotional competence
- Social and resistance skills
- Goals and decisionmaking
- Perceived harmful effects

Positive effects on substance use and protective factors continued to be seen both short- and long-term. Outcomes in comparison to controls include significant increases in students' protective factors ( $p \leq .001$ ).

#### **IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

In comparison to control group, Too Good for Drugs students evidenced fewer intentions to:

- Smoke cigarettes (33% middle school, 58% high school)
- Drink alcohol (38% middle school, 50% high school)
- Smoke marijuana (25% middle school, 45% high school)
- Fight (45% high school)

#### **OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES**

Statistically significant positive effects on a number of risk/protective factors related to substance use, including social skills, decisionmaking and goal setting, self-efficacy, perception of harm, and attitudes toward drug use.

#### **Benefits**

- Reduces risk and enhances protective factors that affect alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use
- Reduces intentions to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs
- Develops more appropriate attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs
- Improves decision making, goal setting, and peer resistance
- Increases friendships with peers less likely to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs

## **EVALUATION DESIGN**

Five studies conducted by independent evaluator Tina Bacon have examined TGFD's effectiveness in reducing adolescents' intention to use tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana, reducing fighting, and strengthening protective and resiliency factors. All of the studies examined pretest equivalence between treatment and control groups; potential bias of loss of student data over time; quality of program implementation; and estimates of reliability and validity of assessment tools.

Middle school studies used a repeated measures treatment-control group design. Middle schools from the Hillsborough County school district were stratified based on location, size, academic performance, and socioeconomic status. Sixth-grade students (n = 1,318) were pre- and posttested following the delivery of the TGFD program, 20 weeks, and 1 year later.

High school studies used a pretest/posttest randomized design. Sample populations included students from one large high school from the Nation's 12th largest school district (n = 201) and students from six high schools in a small, rural Florida school district (n = 303).

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## **DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS**

### **5–24 WEEKS**

**Amount of time required to deliver the program to obtain documented outcomes:**

Grades K–5 have 10 weekly 30- to 45-minute lessons.

Grades 6–8 have 10 weekly 45- to 50-minute lessons.

Grades 9–12 have a core curriculum with 14 weekly 1-hour lessons and 12 1-hour infusion lessons to be implemented within various subject areas.

Ideally, implementation begins with "Too Good for Drugs & Violence—Educators," a 10-hour staff development program attended by all school personnel—from teachers and secretaries to janitors and food service workers. The staff development curriculum is for K–12 educators. It may be implemented in ten 1-hour sessions or as a 1- or 2-day workshop.

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## **INTENDED SETTING**

### **RURAL, URBAN, SUBURBAN**

Developed for rural, urban, and suburban settings.

## **FIDELITY**

Components that must be included in order to achieve the same outcomes cited by the developer:

Too Good for Drugs is a comprehensive prevention program with five separate modules: K–5; 6–8; High School; After School Activities; Staff Development. The basic program is effective, and added modules increase effectiveness.

Committed, skilled staff is essential.

Teach the lessons at the rate of one per week. (The high school core curriculum also has had positive effects when taught at the rate of two lessons per week.)

Optional components or strategies and how they were determined to be optional:

Lesson extenders and recommended resources such as books, videos, and pamphlets are included with each lesson. The program was evaluated and proven effective without these optional components, offered for reinforcement.

The after-school activities program can be used in conjunction with Too Good for Drugs or by itself.

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## **BARRIERS AND PROBLEMS**

**Problem:** Some teachers may be reluctant to take time away from teaching their subjects in order to implement drug prevention education.

**Solution:** Provide the Too Good for Drugs staff development program to raise teachers' awareness of the connection between prevention education and students' academic success.

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## **PERSONNEL**

### **FULL TIME, PART TIME**

Both full-time and part-time paid staff have successfully taught the program.

Appointment of a schoolwide coordinator and grade level coordinators is recommended. Staff-to-program participant ratio is 1 teacher for 30 to 35 students.

For successful implementation, TGFD requires skilled, committed, enthusiastic teachers who personally exhibit the attributes encouraged by TGFD, e.g., non-smokers and non-substance abusers, possessing positive social skills, showing empathy and kindness.

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## **EDUCATION**

### **UNDERGRADUATE**

Minimum educational requirement is a 4-year college degree. Qualifications are teaching skills, enthusiasm, and commitment to the prevention program. Teachers should also exhibit attributes encouraged by Too Good for Drugs, such as positive social skills, empathy, kindness, and a healthy lifestyle (i.e., nonsmoking and non-substance-abusing).

## PERSONNEL TRAINING

Type: SEMINARS, Location: ONSITE (user)/OFFSITE (developer or trainer location),  
Length: BASIC/REFRESHER (if required)

Teacher training provided by the developer is highly recommended. The developer offers 1- or 2-day teacher/staff training on how to use each grade-specific curriculum. The developer also offers both basic and refresher training, tailored to meet the needs of the school district, which may be held onsite, at the Mendez Foundation in Tampa, FL, and in other locations. The training addresses:

- Fundamentals of teaching the curriculum
- Essential curriculum components
- Practicing student activities
- Strategies for teaching life skills to students
- Sequential skills building through curriculum grade levels
- Research and strategies to build children's resiliency

Ideally, implementation begins with "Too Good for Drugs & Violence—Educators," a 10-hour staff development program attended by all school personnel—from teachers and secretaries to janitors and food service workers.

One- or two-day teacher/staff training on how to use each grade-specific curriculum is strongly recommended. Training and technical support are provided by The Mendez Foundation.

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## COST (estimated in U.S. dollars)

\$1,001–5,000

Cost considerations for implementing this Model Program as recommended by the developer:

### TRAINING

Onsite 1-day training (for a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 50 participants) costs \$1,500 plus travel expenses with a purchase of \$1,500 or more in materials.

### MATERIALS

Kits for grades K–8, including curriculum, 50 workbooks, audiocassette, posters, and puppets, videos, and games as required . . . . .	\$100–\$130 per kit
Curriculum only, per grade K–8 . . . . .	\$50
Workbooks in packages of 25 . . . . .	\$15
High School Kit (3 curricula, teaching materials and workbooks) . . . . .	\$750
After School Activities Kit (curriculum and teaching materials) . . . . .	\$595
Staff Development Kit (curriculum and workbooks) . . . . .	\$250

## Resources/Materials

TGFD includes 10 lessons (kindergarten–8th grade), a 14-lesson core curriculum plus 12 infusion lessons in high school, and 10 staff development sessions. Each grade-level kit includes a scripted curriculum, participant workbooks, and teaching materials. Each lesson includes rationale, objectives, materials list, recommended resources, lesson extenders, and a "Home Workout" or "Home Pages" for parents.

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## INTENDED AGE GROUP

CHILDHOOD (5–11), EARLY ADOLESCENT (12–14), TEENAGER (15–17)

Too Good for Drugs was developed for kindergarten through 12th grade.

The Too Good for Drugs After School Activities kit is for children 5 to 13 years of age.

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## INTENDED POPULATION

AFRICAN AMERICAN, ASIAN AMERICAN, HISPANIC/LATINO, WHITE

This program was tested with students of varying racial and ethnic groups, and found effective with White, Hispanic/Latino, African American, and Asian American students.

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## GENDER FOCUS

BOTH GENDERS

Developed for both male and female students.

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## REPLICATION INFORMATION

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **ABOUT THE DEVELOPER**

The developer is the Mendez Foundation, an innovative leader in the fields of prevention and education since 1978.

### **FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT**

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